



News Release from Congressman

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PORT SECURITY BILL SAILS THROUGH HOUSE

Homeland Security Committee Member Simmons Helps Craft Bipartisan Legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, today announced the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a port security bill that would establish procedures for restoring port operations in the event of an attack, require the department to develop standards for container seals and codify several existing port security programs. As a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, Simmons helped craft the bipartisan legislation.

“Today’s port security legislation better prepares us against potential terrorist attacks at our U.S. ports,” Simmons said. “It calls for billions to tighten port security, including screening 98 percent of all incoming cargo with the nuclear and biological detectors. It’s a good bill that strengthens security at our ports.”

The legislation ([HR 4954](#)), authorizes \$7.4 billion for port security over six years and revamps port security policies. The measure requires the Department of Homeland Security to take steps to install radiation detectors at U.S. ports, develop plans for the restoration of commerce during a disaster and authorize several existing port security programs. H.R. 4954 passed the House by a vote of 421 to 2.

About 95 percent of U.S. trade, worth nearly \$1 trillion, flows through the nation's 361 seaports. The cargo arrives on more than 8,500 foreign vessels, which make more than 55,000 calls at U.S. ports annually. The ships transport about 11 million cargo containers, which carry 800 million tons of goods. An additional 175 billion gallons of oil and other fuels also arrive in the United States on ships.

Connecticut’s three major ports – Bridgeport, New Haven and New London – are home to a regional depot for the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve, shipyards, cargo operations and passenger and auto ferries and are an integral part of the state’s transportation infrastructure.

Simmons concluded, “Strengthening our nation's port security should never be a partisan issue. Today, Republicans and Democrats came together in support of a strong homeland security bill, and I am proud to have played a part in crafting this legislation.”

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